

## School Scenario: Yellow Rose Middle School

<b>School Name</b> Yellow Rose Middle School	<b>Grade Levels Served</b> 6–8	<b>Population</b> Students: 939 Teachers: 99
<b>Demographics</b> Black: 97% Other: 3%	<b>Existing School Teams</b> School Leadership Teams Grade-Level Teams	

The principal is a fourth-year principal who was hired after the previous principal was moved to another school in the district because of low test scores and low staff morale. The current principal came to this urban school from a rural setting where she was able to move that school out of priority status. She is often in her office in staff-related meetings with teachers, union representatives, or district staff members. The primary responsibility assigned to the assistant principal is to supervise all aspects of the social studies, history, and science content areas. Although the school deans are responsible for student discipline issues, the assistant principal is often required to attend district discipline hearings at least twice monthly.

The principal oversees the English and mathematics content areas; however, she does rely heavily on school-based content specialists to identify teachers in need of support or reprimand. The principal conducts classroom observations for teacher annual appraisals using the district's evaluation instrument. Although she conducts the required number of weekly walk-throughs, she is always accompanied by the content specialists and requires that they assist with entering information into the database. The principal has a hard time prioritizing responsibilities. Although she provided the staff with a school meeting calendar for the year, this principal often overbooks and must therefore reschedule meetings or push the time back. These changes often require staff members to stay at the school past 5 p.m.

The principal requires staff members to give weekly and quarterly assessments to students as well as submit their results to her electronically. She then directs the content specialists to facilitate data meetings with grade-level teams and will attend only if specialists believe she needs to attend. The staff is often frustrated with the data reporting because the principal continually changes the form or requirements. Teachers do not use the current form that the principal provided, but instead use one that a group of teachers developed on its own. The staff believes this format provides more detailed root causes that can easily translate into a plan of action.

The school has one English and reading specialist as well as one mathematics specialist. The principal and school-based content specialists have a process for tiering teachers for intervention. Specialists are required to attend all grade-level team planning meetings and work with identified Tier 3 teachers. This support may be in the form of modeling, coteaching, or lesson planning. Although the specialists have not shared this concern with the principal, they do not believe they can meet these obligations because the principal requires them to participate in all instructional

walk-throughs with her regardless of their schedules. School specialists also are expected to provide job-embedded professional development sessions at weekly grade-level and monthly department meetings, based on need. As of the end of the semester, only five professional development sessions have been held. The specialists are scheduled to meet with the principal every Friday at 1 p.m. to discuss weekly walk-through findings, upcoming professional development for staff, and teacher progress or tiering of teachers. Of the 18 meetings scheduled, only seven have been held because the principal often cancels them. When meetings are held, the discussions typically result in the specialists “telling on” teachers or the principal asking them to do other work.

Grade-level content teams are required to hold weekly professional learning community (PLC) meetings during their 90-minute planning block. The grade-level chair facilitates the meeting while other team members serve as timekeeper or scribe. The group has developed team norms, but not all facilitators ensure that these norms are followed. The teams use PLC time to discuss assessment results from the previous week and develop a plan of intervention. The school-based content coaches attend these meetings and provide support to develop this plan. Although each PLC is expected to submit minutes to its assigned administrator, PLCs are not doing this currently because teams are no longer receiving feedback from the administrators nor are the administrators attending meetings. It is therefore difficult to determine whether meetings are actually being held and what corrective actions are being put into place.

**Address the following:**

- What are some of the challenges this principal is facing?
- What are some things the principal could do differently?
- Prioritize and recommend next steps.
- Use the action plan format to identify one next step for this principal.